

MISSISSIPPI RIVER FORUM

Friday, May 8, 2015

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Science Museum of Minnesota—Discovery Hall

120 West Kellogg Boulevard, St. Paul, MN 55102

7:45-8:30 **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:30 **Welcoming Remarks**

Patrick Hamilton. Director—Global Change Initiatives, Science Museum of Minnesota.

John Anfinson. Superintendent—Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, National Park Service.

Katie Nyberg. Executive Director, Mississippi River Fund.

8:45-9:30 **The Return of the River Otters**

North American river otter are returning from near extinction to their native habitat along the Mississippi River. Thanks to improved habitat and water quality, increased sightings throughout the metro area have sparked public and scientific interest in this playful species. Learn how the National Park Service and partners work to monitor river otter populations within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area in order to better protect and conserve these fascinating animals for future generations.

Allison Holdhusen. National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

9:30-9:45 **Break**

9:45-10:30 **Minnesota's Buffer Initiative: An Up-to-Date Look at the Proposed Legislation**

In January, Governor Dayton announced he would introduce legislation this year requiring 50-foot water quality buffer strips around Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and streams—a proclamation that has been heralded by many for its potential to help protect the state's water resources. Since Governor Dayton's announcement, dozens of groups have been contributing to the development of the draft legislation. As the legislative session draws to a close, we'll hear how the legislation is shaping up and what it might mean for impacts to our shared water resources.

John Jaschke. MN Board of Water and Soil Resources.

10:30-11:15 Risk Communication in an Environment of Doubt

Our lives are permeated by science and technology in new and surprising ways. Often, this has been rich with rewards: carrying the world's collective knowledge and opinion in our pockets on devices smaller than a stack of note cards, participating in world events in real-time, and accessing endless information about scientific frontiers. But this new world is also very complicated—and unnerving for some—as we face risks we can't easily see or identify, risks that are challenging to analyze. Which are real and which are imaginary? Risk communication helps people make sense of the information around them and make informed decisions about the hazards facing them. Risk communicators must navigate the balance between individual risk perception and the growing movement of science doubt or denial. Understanding the deeply-held psychological and sociological principles that influence decision-making can help us stay relevant and promote good science in today's environment of doubt. We all communicate about our work, and need to understand the motivations of our audiences. You won't want to miss this discussion.

Katie Nyquist. MN Department of Health.

11:15-11:45 Break

**11:45-12:30 Keynote Address: Regulating for Drinking Water Protection in Iowa's Agriculture Watersheds
Bill Stowe, Des Moines Water Works**

Bill Stowe is the CEO and General Manager of Des Moines Water Works (DMWW). DMWW is a regional water provider that works closely with business, environmental, consumer and agricultural leaders to advocate for better stewardship of water resources and clean water initiatives throughout Central Iowa.

Earlier this year, DMWW filed a Clean Water Act complaint against three “upstream” counties that manage agricultural drainage districts discharging high nitrate concentrations into the Raccoon River. The complaint was filed in response to the utility's need to remove high nitrate concentrations in its source waters for the public health of its customers, at an enormous expense, and after voluntary conservation strategies failed to adequately reduce pollution. This controversial action has captured national attention, and is forcing communities to grapple directly with questions over responsibility for agricultural water pollution, and the costs of clean water.

Bill is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Grinnell College with a Bachelor of Arts, and received a Master of Science in Engineering from the University of Wisconsin, a Master of Science in Industrial Relations from the University of Illinois, and a Juris Doctorate Degree from Loyola University Law School. He is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the Iowa Bar Association. He frequently acts through the American Arbitration Association as an impartial arbitrator in resolving complex construction and commercial disputes.

We are honored that Mr. Stowe will be with us to discuss the process leading up to, and the repercussions of, the DMWW's decision to file this complaint.

12:30 Closing Remarks

Lark Weller. Water Quality Coordinator, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

***This event has been brought to you by the National Park Service,
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Thank you to the Science Museum of Minnesota for hosting today's event.***